

Introduction

States have a responsibility under federal law to have a system of general supervision. The purpose of having that system is to be able to monitor the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has identified eight components related to the system of general supervision: (1) State Systemic Improvement Plans; (2) Policies, Procedures, and Effective Implementation; (3) Integrated Monitoring Activities; (4) Fiscal Management; (5) Data on Processes and Results; (6) Improvement, Corrections, and Sanctions; (7) Effective Dispute Resolution; and (8) Targeted Technical Assistance and Professional Development.

In order for the State to have an effective system of general supervision, that system must support practices that improve educational results by encouraging and supporting improvement while monitoring procedural compliance. The Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services, (ADE/ESS) views effectiveness as

- Correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements of the statutes and
- Ensuring quality learning and life outcomes for children.

Targeted technical assistance and professional development are ongoing activities and are a major part of the ADE/ESS general supervision system. Technical assistance is designed to support local education agencies (LEAs) in their own systems of internal supervision for procedural compliance. LEAs can access and request targeted technical assistance in order to improve student outcomes. Technical assistance ranges from staff trainings to webinars and statewide conferences. Technical assistance documents are also available online or through the education program specialist assigned to each LEA.

General Supervision in the Transition Year

The ADE/ESS general supervision system is based upon the results-driven accountability requirements from OSEP. During the 2014–2015 school year, we will be transitioning from our current monitoring system to the system of Examining Practices.

The general supervision system is structured around collaborative conversations and technical assistance. All schools will be involved in the following activities in the transition year:

Technical Assistance from ESS

Review of Policies and Procedures

Collection of Student Exit Data

Collection of Post-School Outcomes

Collection of Indicators 11 and 13 Data

During the transition year, ADE will be reviewing data with LEAs to investigate general supervision activities for the next year. ADE/ESS uses methods and procedures to implement general supervision that are consistent, but flexible, in order to adapt to the varying needs of children, educational settings, and administrative realities. In reviewing data, a LEA's monitoring schedule may be adjusted, and examining practices activities may be assigned anytime data indicate broad issues across systems. Specific components for the transition year are detailed in this document.

ESS Examining Practices Model in the Transition Year

The Arizona Examining Practices system is being revised to increase the focus on data through results-driven accountability for each LEA with less emphasis being put on procedural compliance. While procedural compliance is important, it will not be the sole focus of Examining Practices, but will be another data point to consider. In addition, ADE/ESS will be working with LEAs to help them develop their own systems of internal supervision. Examining Practices will consider compliance and outcomes in the review of LEA policies and procedures and practices, as well as in conversations about a LEA's own internal supervision system.

The program specialist assigned to the school district or charter school will meet with the LEA director each spring to discuss the LEA data to plan for any upcoming examining practices activities.

The better the data are across systems, the better a LEA is able to provide quality programs for students with disabilities. Transition-year activities are for the LEAs currently in year four of the monitoring cycle. As general supervision moves toward results-driven accountability, the focus will be away from straight procedural compliance to activities that assist LEAs in building their own systems of supervision and outcomes for students. The activities during the transition year are:

- Examining Data to Improve Student Achievement (EDISA): Training and use of a Data-Use Framework that supports continuous improvement of outcomes and results.
- Examining practices for improvement and sustainability: Collaboration to develop an action plan (based on data, guiding questions, and/or internal systems of supervision) for improved outcomes.

Arizona has found it essential to include LEA staff as active partners with ADE/ESS staff when examining LEA data, but especially when examining practices. The LEA and ESS team work together during all activities. Some tasks are completed together, and some tasks are completed by the LEA staff after they receive training from the ESS staff. The LEA must have a team, which includes LEA employee(s) and a general education representative, as active participants.

Ongoing technical assistance plays a significant role in the general supervision of LEAs in Arizona. ESS program specialists conduct annual visits with each assigned LEA for a collaborative site visit to review the LEA's system of internal supervision and its policies, procedures, and practices. Also included are data related to indicators 11 and 13. Program specialists provide ongoing technical assistance related to other issues and questions that may arise. Targeted training is available when data indicate a need.

ESS Monitoring Grants

Grants will be available for public education agencies that have been identified for examining practices. This invitation-only grant will support district and charter school staff members in participating in team training for examining practices; the team training will focus on analyzing performance and other data, which will be used to identify appropriate evidence-based practices to improve student results. Monies will be allotted based on identified needs. The grant's allowable expenses include funding for substitutes, team training registration fees, and travel based on the individual team's needs. Grants are accessible at www.azed.gov – **ADE CONNECT**

Grant applications must be completed prior to the monitoring start date. Applications that are not approved by the monitoring start date will not be funded.

Enforcement Activities

If a LEA is unable to correct all identified noncompliance within a year from the Written Notification of Findings letter, one or more of the following enforcement actions will be taken, based on the severity of the remaining noncompliance. LEAs are entitled to request a hearing if they wish to challenge the enforcement action(s).

ESS development of a prescribed Action Plan with required activities and timelines to address the continuing noncompliance.
Enforcement of Action Plan activities as outlined in the current agency Action Plan.
Review and revision of the current Action Plan to develop targeted activities that address the continuing noncompliance.
Special monitor selection.
Interruption of IDEA payments until adequate compliance is achieved. For charter schools not receiving IDEA funds, a request for withholding 10% of state funds.
For charter schools, a request to the appropriate board for a notice of intent to revoke the charter.
With the Arizona State Board of Education approval, interruption of Group B weighted state aid or redirection of funds pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §300.222(a).
Request to the attorney general for assistance in law enforcement.